

**FSCS Workshop I**  
**March 1 - 3, 1995**

**Steering Committee Meeting:**

Attendance: Gerry Rowland (Chair), Adrienne Chute, Liz Gibson, Keith Curry Lance, Libby Law (Secretary), John Lorenz, Mary Jo Lynch, Mark Smith, Walt Terrie, Diana Young, Alan Zimmerman (Co-Chair).

The Steering Committee met for a briefing on the Workshop Agenda and Diana Young reviewed the plans for the NCES Summer Data Conference.

The schedule for the new data elements was reviewed. Trial data will be collected in 1996 with official data collected in 1997 and published in 1998.

**FSCS Workshop I**  
**Driskill Hotel**  
**Austin, TX**

**March 1:**

**Opening Session:**

Gerry Rowland welcomed the State Data Coordinators and thanked Mark Smith for handling local arrangements. New State Data Coordinators were introduced.

David Boesel, Acting Director of the National Institute for Post Secondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning, described the new organization of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) of the Department of Education and how the organization will be evolving.

Carrol Kindel informed the State Data Coordinators of the involvement of the Census Bureau and their contributions to the compilation and review of the data. The importance of timely submission of acceptable data was stressed. In spite of delays in submission of data by some states, thanks to assistance from the Census Bureau, publication of the data is at least on the same track as last year, and hopefully will be available sooner. Use of the Data Machine for submission of data will be tested and this option is still available to states wanting to try it. The Technical Sub-Committee will receive the status report at the April meeting.

Walt Terrie reported that PUBLDAP still has problems.

Candidates for Steering Committee were introduced and each given an opportunity to address the group. Diana Ray Tope, one of the candidates was unable to attend this session but was able to address the group at a later session.

**Orientation of New State Data Coordinators:**

New State Data Coordinators and others wishing to attend participated in a hands-on orientation in the use of DECPLUS after a brief overview of FSCS provided by Gerry Rowland.

**Reception:**

The Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Texas hosted a reception for the Workshop on the University of Texas campus.

**March 2:****Caucus:**

State and Territorial Data Coordinators were given an opportunity to meet to discuss their concerns.

**General Session:**

Alan Zimmerman, Chair, Definitions Subcommittee, reviewed the process by which new data elements are adopted and definitions revised. He then presented the 10 proposed new data elements which were discussed by the group.

Among the concerns expressed included:

- #1 Public Library definition: the need/desire to achieve consistency between State and Federal definitions. Addition of phrases about source of funding and being open to the public were discussed.
- #2 General agreement to discontinue collection of Films data
- #3 & #4 Need clearer definition of Internet - utility vs. telecommunication network. Is it practical to omit purely Administrative use? What if library only has e-mail access?
- #5 Need to separate on-site vs. remote access to resources IN the library. Need definition for each of the electronic services identified.
- #6 Again need to separate on-site access vs. remote access to resources available through the library
- #7 Again need to separate on-site vs. remote access.
- #8 Physical Count: Is application software counted? Could this be a "special survey"? Titles vs. physical units. Do other materials definitions need to be revised to merge electronic with other formats? How to count licensed materials?
- #9 Current serials included in #9, not included in #8. Either include in both or exclude from both. Make it clear that expenses involved are operating expenses, not initial start-up/capital expenses. Are leased materials to be included?
- #10 Are telecommunication cost to be included here? Rationale for adding this data element is to document the shift of use of financial resources from purchase of materials to use for accessing resources.

Big concern is to balance the burden of the collection of the data with the value and usefulness of the data collected. Concern about methodology used to collect data.

**Small group discussion:**

The General Session was followed by discussion of the Census Report on Evaluation of Definitions Used in the Public Library Statistics Program.

**Working lunch:**

Jeanne Hurley Simon, NCLIS Chairperson, and Peter R. Young, NCLIS Executive Director entertained the group with a lively dialog on "Restructuring the Federal Role for Libraries."

Mary Alice Hedge, Carrol Kindel, John Lorenz, Joe Shubert and Jeanne Simon participated in presenting Keppel Awards to 38 States. Forty-four states have won the award over the past 4 years.

**GIS Software:**

Walt Terry used GIS Software to present information about the 1993 data which was submitted in 1994.

**Flag Show:**

Mark Smith presented a wide variety of examples of the use of data in different states. Keith Lance then announced the creation of the Helen Eckard Award which will be presented to states for innovative and exemplary use of FSCS Data. Up to 5 awards will be presented each year. The first award(s) will be presented at the Summer Data Conference.

**Data Collection Tools:**

Liz Gibson reported on the survey on local data collection software. Comparative data was compiled and distributed and presentations/demonstrations were made for the following:

Iowa: WP INFORMS

Illinois: IPLAR (LRC - QUERY)

New Jersey: LSTAT9X

Census: IMPS

State Data Coordinators were reminded that these are options they may want to explore in developing their own local reporting software. Technical assistance is available to assist states in the collection of data - both with the utilization of software to collect and report the data and to assist with training of local library staff in data collection and use.

**Dinner:**

Brooke Sheldon, Dean, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Texas addressed the group. Jan Moltzen, Co-Chair, ALA/LSCA Reauthorization Task Force presented information on the status of reauthorization of LSCA.

**March 3:****Focus Group:**

Data Coordinators broke into groups to address the same 5 questions which were presented at the last FSCS Workshop. Information from these discussions will be used to improve FSCS and better meet the needs of Data Coordinators.

**Plans for FSCS Workshop II**

Diana Young, Chair, Training Subcommittee, presented information about the Summer Data Conference, "There's Safety in Numbers" and encouraged all Data Coordinators to attend. Topics of concern to libraries were identified and individuals were strongly encouraged to see that proposals are submitted for presentations which address these areas of concern.

**Business Meeting:****Steering Committee:**

Liz Gibson (California) and Diana Ray Tope (Georgia) were elected to the Steering Committee. 1995 Officers are: Alan Zimmerman, Chair and Mark Smith, Vice-chair.

**Data Use:**

Keith Lance reported on the status of the Data Use Sub-committee activities and on the Oregon project to identify minimum levels of service.

**Expense Reimbursement:**

The procedures for submission of expenses for reimbursement were reviewed.

**1994 Steering Committee Objectives:**

The 1994 Steering Committee Objectives were reviewed.

1. Improve timeliness and accuracy of data submission - achieved 99.9% on some of the items
2. Improve DECPLUS - done
3. Review and refine data element definitions - significant progress made
4. Local reporting software - presented several options for states to consider
5. Encourage sharing of resources for data collection and dissemination - Options of electronic data collection presented at the Workshop demonstrated the willingness of States to share

6. Fast response sample survey - Children's & YA survey and Library Programs survey
7. Electronic archive - Mimie Rutledge (NCLIS) is working on this

### **1995 Objectives**

1. Finalize process of endorsed Data Elements
2. Finish PUBLDAP
3. Support data collection by providing technical assistance where needed
4. Develop Library System Survey
5. Complete State Library Agency Survey
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Summer Data Conference
7. Continue the review of definitions used by the States

### **Closing address:**

In the closing address, Joe Shubert, (COSLA Representative) complimented the Data Coordinators on the success of their work. He said that he, the COSLA Research and Statistics Committee, and many State librarians are "enormously grateful for the E.D. Tabs and the data rankings." He said that the work of the coordinators is essential to the future of library services because it is basic to evaluation and advocacy for public library services. In effect, FSCS data is needed for the "re-invention" of library services to assure continue opportunity for lifelong learning and advancement of all people in the telecommunications era.

He said that many State librarians agree that there are four "pressing needs of public libraries" as: (1) public policy recognition of their education roles in a learning society; (2) dependable support for quality services (3) library access to telecommunications and other technologies; and (4) "re-invention" in a period in which all public services are being re-examined.

Shubert also said that the data which the coordinators produce is powerful, needed data, but it is under-utilized. A related problem is that many people, both in State libraries and in the libraries from whom FSCS data is collected, may see the work of the Data Coordinator as a problem to them.

To deal with these problems, he recommended that coordinators share helpful information inside the State library agency to colleagues as they need it. He urged coordinators to take advantage of the State librarian's routine sign-off to the FSCS data by providing the State librarian with information as well as data sheets.

He also recommended formatting information and data in ways which make it easy for the individual to use it and providing it "in small bits." He praised examples of data presentation and use of graphic featured in the workshop sessions. He recommended that coordinators:

think about the data needs of other members of the State library agency staff, and “team up with them” as they work with colleagues or the State librarian;

help the agency’s external customers use data, and encourage them to credit the State library agency or the coordinator for the information -- even “help them write an article” by providing data they need;

provide a “line or two of text” with each graphic because “not all users are quick studies”

enhance data by identifying trends and relationships, or making comparisons;

write brief articles (“about the size of a letter to the editor”) for association newsletters, focusing on “information rather than process.”

In his strategic advice, he urged coordinators to (1) “make it easier for libraries to supply data and supply it right,” noting the importance of training, electronic collection at point of origin, and mentoring data suppliers; (2) take advantage of help from the State librarian, FSCS mentors, and John Lorenz -- “if you see a problem ahead, give an early alert;” (3) sell your product by building customer relations both within and outside the agency; and (4) celebrate accomplishments.

He concluded by urging coordinators to take care of themselves because many government agencies are characterized by stress, uncertainty, and greatly demanding assignments. “Depersonalize” these problems, understand the continuities and look to the future -- the “desired state.” Many coordinators carry several responsibilities by “remember that what you do with your data coordinator’s portfolio is essential to the future of libraries.”

**The meeting was adjourned.**